

When Children Walked the Earth

Chapter 2 **The Mercy of Authoritarian Government**

God makes this wonderful world, a Paradise. The way He tells the story it is clear that he made it all not only to fit together, but to move through time toward a particular goal and purpose. It reveals the sort of person He is, and the sort of people He creates to guard and keep it moving through History.

God's creation comes from His words. Words both we and the inanimate world understand because they tell a story bigger than the simple math of what happened. These words bring all things into existence in an orderly way, not an aimless bunch of stuff, but the words call out three kingdoms, and appoints rulers to them,

Light and dark on day one ruled over by Sun Moon and Stars which he created on day four.

On day two he calls out Sky and Sea ruled over by Birds and fish whom he speaks into existence on day 5.

On Day three he creates dry land and fills it with plants.

Then on Day 6 he fills the green land with all the animals and creeping things: the rulers of the land.

At the end of the Day God creates the ones who were to walk the earth doing with it what He would do, only as part of the creation. He made them like Him so that they could imagine a thing and bring it into being. He made them like Him with purpose and tied up the meaning of their life in their ability to purpose and then bring to pass.

When He was done he stood in front of them and declared them beings fully in His Image, yet one was completely Male and the Other completely Female. The only hint that one might possess more leadership qualities than the other lay in the fact that he called one of them the Helper that would be appropriate to the other. In doing this He gave His own title. He refers to Himself 17 times in the Old Testament and then define His and His people's leadership by that concept when He finally came Himself in the flesh He came as a Helper, a Servant.

Finished, He then declares the 7th day a day of rest making the pattern of labor leading to climactic fruition in rest, the pattern of all history.

The way He tells the beginning of His story anticipates the climax of his story. In the beginning He brings forth The Rulers as the

crown of creation, two different from each other, yet one flesh, reflecting the Image of the Godhead and they enter into His Seventh Day of Rest. These are a people who in time He can dwell with, live in, and actually become one without giving up his Transcendent Divinity. When He does become flesh He inaugurates the ultimate climax, the seventh day of rest, of enthronement in Creation and History.¹

Before we finish the Third Chapter, all of History is laid out before us, His Epic which He has begun to recount to us.

He takes both the Man and the Woman and says something to them that stands from the beginning for all time. It is how things are. There is nothing that can change it. The first recorded words of God defining what they were was to name them both Man.

Christal clear is the fact that whatever it is about the word “Man” that designates humanity, both genders possess it fully. They both lack nothing that is human. They lack no authority, no power, no wisdom, knowledge, or being, so that both of them are fully appropriately called by the same name. The fact that all fallen cultures until the last century attributed humanity to be possessed in greater portion by males, only highlights the unusual wording in the beginning of the Bible indicating that from the beginning that sort of dominance was not so. Whatever it is that makes him male and her female is not relevant to that created Image of God which a human being is.

There is not a human who has lived nor a culture that has existed and not speculated on what it is that makes humanity unique or the sexes different. It is impossible to catalogue all the ideas and after 1850, the anti-ideas. What God does in this story, in the simplest of words is declare that whatever it is that makes a man human a woman is no less that trait, thing, essence, characteristic or whatever else it might be that the philosophers speculate. “In the image of God He created them, male and female He made them.”

The first recorded words of God to them defining them after they stood before Him defined not their attributes but rather the purpose of their being human. Fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and rule over it. Two maybe three simple commands and now you see unfolding before them all of history in these three commands. It is going somewhere. Somewhere Good. Somewhere full of beings who are not bound by the things that blight and destroy every effort. People free to exchange with each other both tangible, intangible, physical, intellectual things that mean more to the other person than the things they exchange them for. This is the root of free economics though economics is only a fragment of that tree of freedom rooted in God’s law.

¹ Hebrews 4; Matthew 1.

These first words defined their image likeness to God. Like Him they are persons; who are purposing beings; who can imagine a thing and then bring it into being. God just got through doing it and now He was commissioning two special creatures. He didn't commission one of them to rule over the other who is a second class helper. Helping only became second class because authoritarian government is essentially a slavery inevitable when they fell away from hearts defined by God's word. From the beginning helping is the ground of all authority in God's creation, which ground Jesus reestablishes as He brings in what Hebrews calls the Sabbath Rest of History.

Whoa, Wait. Stop! All you who think that being in God's Image is what makes masculinity the basis of authority from the beginning, take note here, all we are told is male and female. Nothing more about the man, nothing about being in charge based on his gender. What we are told of the woman, however is that she is named with a central attribute of God, "helper," and that central attribute will be the way the God who became Man describes His ministry, His authority, and the work of the Holy Spirit who fills His people and works powerfully through them. You will look long and hard to find any similar attribute ascribed to the gendered male until after the fall. Then he is put in charge as long as the cursed creation needs authoritarian government for one human to control another. He is in charge as long as humanity is under the curse. What we find of the woman is her authority is sourced from the original definition of authority. From the beginning she is a helper just like God Almighty Himself.

If being in God's image were more the property of one than another, then who does God describe as most closely like Him? Does the first shall be last mean anything more to you than gibberish you would expect from a Guru? Or did Jesus mean what He said from the beginning of His Creative Word? The night of winter when "someone must be in charge" is over.

It's Christmas.

But going back to that idea of being like God who is a creator, the human habitat unlike the animals was whatever we could envision and then create, never what we just found. We were the one created being that created our own living space and knit society around it. The human ecology, the human ecosystem is his own psycho-social-spiritual creation. The human ecosphere is fundamentally moral, root and branch.

But they were innocent. They were immature. They did not know their right hand from their left. There is no such thing as a society without maturity and there is no such thing as maturity without a standard of right and wrong. They had to learn that. It was not just written on the rocks for them to read. And so the story tells us that after defining their being, God gives them their first lesson in morality which is the foundation of responsible adulthood.

The world was designed to be ruled by people who are adult, mature in their ethical understanding and judgments through which they applied that understanding to everything.

With the first lesson in ethics and judgment God introduces the first promise of the Bible. It is the Death Penalty. He tells them not to do something, then says, “The day you do it you will die.”

They missed the point of the lesson: “God said . . .” that is our source code for all creative human action — the prime directive — the final authentication of any moral act. There is no possible reason to justify anything God says. In fact there is no way to justify what God says. God’s word is the standard for any rule you might apply to it.

Children need authoritarian supervision. The alternative to strong guidance for children is anarchy. Adam and Eve had to progress beyond the innocence of childhood. More than years they had to be established in ethical judgment.

The story in the garden ends with Adam and Eve frozen in ethical judicial childhood. They rejected God as the one who determines all ethics. They judged themselves to be valid sources for how they should live and they ate the covenant meal with the dragon disguised as a serpent leading them to a bent and misguided introduction to ethics, to warped and childish adulthood.

Children have been walking the earth ever since, unable to grow up, needing desperately an authoritarian leader to keep them in line.

God permitted them, because of the hardness of their heart, to be ruled over by authoritarian rulers. But even here most of their leaders were disasters because they relied on things which simply do not grant them leadership, such as their brains, brawn, prowess in war, cunning in politics, who anointed them to lead, and above all, their testicles. They overlooked the very thing whose neglect put them in slavery to each other, God’s law.

Universal human experience proves that apart from a leader who applies the law with force, all efforts to create a society fall apart quickly because of the people’s inability to govern their lives according to the simple Source Code we were designed to run. God’s code forbids deceiving others, taking what isn’t yours, killing or hurting other people, having sex with someone who is not your wife or husband, and disrespecting authority, particularly parents. Positively, your source code designs you to love without reservation (comparable to your first romance) the transcendent reality who is a person not a force and is not to be confused with anything created and not to abuse your relationship with Him. Finally, you are to order your life to labor and rest.

It is not that there is not broad agreement on these points, all cultures have a version of them. The human habitat cannot be made without them for the individual, the family or the society.

No, the problem is, the human heart is made of stone and without the strong handed code-enforcer, humanity would destroy themselves by lawless anarchy because stone can't itself be the source code to direct their life into fruitful meaning and purpose, much less into any sort of social order. Such direction depends on free men and women who follow their created designed purpose. So, God permitted strong rulers to apply His law from the outside because their hard hearts would not — could not — apply it from their soul and this is how in mercy God preserved humanity however miserable and brutish their rebellion made them.

This is the solid foundation for the parent child analogy of human government whether of the priestly religious governments, the civil governments, or the marriage itself. Leaders identify themselves as the Father and everyone else including the wife as their children, having no basis for self-control therefore no basis to grow toward a purpose by their own self-governed effort. Their hearts are stone, and so elite leaders must control and manage and regulate them for their own good.

Jesus said that God even permitted this authoritarian government in marriage to subjugate the woman as if she were a child, under the Father/Husband's authority.

The religious leaders came to Jesus asking His opinion of a legal power that God gives to a husband to divorce his wife for any reason. Jesus said, "*It was because of the hardness of your heart* that God permitted this." In other words, your hearts, both man and woman, were so bad that you needed the extra power for marriage and the home just to survive. So reluctantly God gives it to you.

Think back to that story in the beginning. When our first couple rejected God's source code, God had to fulfill His first promise in history, "The day you eat of it you will die!" What he did was set up human history for thousands of years to be able to continue based on about 8 promises he made to them concerning themselves, and their rebellion and their future. One of them was that the man would rule over the woman and yet she would not flee from him but still love him. He secured the family and all government from death by granting Authoritarian rule. But it was not how created them originally, and it is not how he planned to leave things forever.

Jesus' bases His comments on this creation fact, noting that it was because of the hardness of their hearts that they needed this authoritarian relationship to make the continuation of the human family possible. It was harsh, but it was better than death and creates a society that longs for deliverance into what God originally intended. Like all authoritarian government, it is as warping and twisting on the leaders as

it is on the followers, we tend not to notice that aspect because we confuse power with wellbeing.

God extended this power of the father enabling him to control his wife by being able to threaten her expulsion from the home. And he would not be guilty if he did so, he would be lawful.

When Jesus answered the religious leaders' question he does not dispute the power or regulate it saying "it should be used in this circumstance but not that one." All you Abolitionists of any evil take note. Jesus doesn't tell us if the scribes understood Moses correctly or not. Jesus rescinds the order however it might be explained. And in a few months he would rescind the curse itself and transform their hearts. In so doing, He lays the foundation for restoring the pre-fall government to the family, and through it to all of man's governing institutions based on service. Not based on gender, not appointment, not status, not anointing, not the vote of men.

The pre-fall order is not one in which both parents make policy, or one makes policy in their area of expertise and rules over the other there. It is not one where Husbands permit their wives to rule this way or that. It is a rule in which the two become one flesh. Yet they are two. Jesus repeats the words he spoke at the dawn of time about marriage, and echo the words he spoke to define their Image: They are Created equal in image yet separated in 2 genders. And His conclusion to both the reality of their being in God's Image and their being One in marriage is "let not *man* break asunder what God has joined together." This goes for any tradition of men that humans might use to weave their habitat in a way that breaks up the union of husband and wife.

This is as true of their authority in the home over their children as it is in the authority granted in their image likeness over all creation. Government patterned after the Creation Marriage, is not a government based on answering the question "Who is in charge here?" Just stop and reflect on that. "Who is in Charge is not relevant between husband and wife."

Paul concludes the matter by basing the authority on husband and wife to a joint submission to each other. It is an authority based on their one flesh service.

New Covenant Authority to govern, is not the authority to set policy and control others so that they must conform to it. That is a child's understanding of authority because all a child knows is authoritarian control by ruling adults. It is natural for the child to assume that authority must mean the power to set policy and forcibly control others as he has been controlled throughout his childhood. (Just as he thinks that being grown up means the power to do whatever he wants.)

It is natural for the children walking the earth since the fall knowing nothing but authoritarian government to believe that someone is always ruling over someone else, controlling someone else, setting policy for someone else. If not the man over the woman then it must be the woman over the man or some form of complementarian joint rule which modern child rearing theory turns into a triumvirate inviting the children to rule with them — an unholy trinity.

That's just how children look at things. So it is hard for children to see what Jesus is talking about without automatically distorting it to fit their world of dependence.

The governmental implications of the Two now become One, is that there is no struggle for supremacy, only a love ripening into the fruit of service. She submits to him . . but wait that puts her in charge in Jesus' Kingdom it is the servants not the masters who rule. So if the husband is to take his rightful place it can't be to give her things to do or set policy as if he is a worldly master. If he is to be in charge how do you trump her submission?

He dies for her.

Who's in charge? That is no longer an issue. You can see if she is submitting and whatever he is doing for her can be compared to dying not giving orders, then clearly neither parent is the child or subject of the other. Their hearts are no longer stone. The world has changed. "Joy to the world the Lord is come. . . . He comes to make His blessings known far as the curse is found."

Government in the home is now possible based on the creation model of One flesh rather than on the terrible schism of sin overcome only by male based power that ruled the home in rebellion.

So too is government in every sphere of life transformed. It is no longer based on the authoritarian model designed to shelter life under the curse. It is based on the Incarnation where God demonstrates to the world that self-government under God's law is possible, Jesus does it on the Cross which removes the curse of the hard heart from His people. He dies to transform us into self-governing people. No longer does the government of a group or organization or nation or church or family require one self governed adult taking power to control another. The dominion granted by God is over the Earth, not over each other.

The Law meant to be the school master until He came Himself to write it on our hearts, is now overcome and hearts of stone needing authoritarianism to survive can now be transformed into hearts of flesh governed by God dwelling in them.

Up until Christ, Civilization is the story of Children walking the earth guided by a few father-leaders.

But the creative word of God in creation has “become flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth.”

Therefore “the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”

The single purpose of the those who govern in the church is not administrative, or disciplinarian, or to set policy. It is to lead each member of the congregation to “the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”

Paul — following Jesus’ lead in Luke 22:25 — clearly believes that God’s government is not established by answering the question, “Who is the Greatest in the Kingdom? Who sets policy before whom the rest of us submit?” It is answering the question, “Who serves his brother, his sister, his neighbor, his wife, her husband? Who is the helper to all? To that person, the least of these, submit as your leader for he is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.”

Paul concludes this passage to the Ephesians 4 echoing the words of Christ who said, “The Great Ones of the Gentiles lord it over their people . . . but it is not to be so among you.” When he says, “This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind.”

“Who is the Greatest” is the vanity of the mind of the “whose in charge” model of fallen leadership whose time is finished.

It is time to bring the age of children wandering the earth to a close. The age of the child-citizen; the child-church member; the child-wife is finished in Christ, on the Cross and at Pentecost. These can now grow up in the Church, the New Covenant community of God.

